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ABSTRACT

As part of its Jobs Initiative (JI) program in six metropolitan areas Denver, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Seattle the Annie E. Casey Foundation sought to develop and test a method for establishing benchmarks for workforce development agencies. Data collected from 10 projects in the JI from April through March, 2000, included measures of program participant levels at specific milestones program enrollment, training completion, placement and retention measures, and costs. Performance measures were determined by developing a program flow model, and participating organizations received 6- and 12-month reports summarizing their performance relative to that of their peers. The study found that the programs had different levels of financial resources and applied them to expenses in different ways, that the programs operated at different volumes, and that the number of placements were significantly correlated with age of the programs (longer-running programs had more placements and retentions). Policy implications of the benchmarking project include the following: (1) effective workforce development programs must measure retention; (2) the true costs of employment and training must be understood; (3) measurement standards are critical for benchmarking; (4) benchmarking is not the same as evaluation; and (5) managers may find tracking only their program over time as valuable as comparisons with other programs. (Profiles of the programs are included in the report.) (KC)

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Benchmarking the Performance of Employment and Training Programs:

A Pilot Effort of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Jobs Initiative

Doug Welch, Abt Associates Inc.[1]

March 2001

This research brief is the fifth in a series of updates related to issues around retention and advancement for low-income residents and lessons learned from the Annie E Casey Jobs Initiative. The report benefited enormously from comments from Susan Gewirtz and Robert Giloth of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and contributions and editorial assistance from Wendy Fleischer and Ed Hatcher of the Hatcher Group.

[1] Abt Associates is the lead evaluator of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 8-year Jobs Initiative. Doug Welch currently directs the evaluation.

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Introduction

As in many social change endeavors, funders and practitioners in the workforce development field are likely to establish outcomes and performance measures by which they can gauge the success of their activities. However, the advent of time-limited, work-based welfare and the corresponding proliferation in workforce development efforts aimed at very low-income people has taken place without the benefit of commonly accepted standards of achievement for these efforts. Welfare reform can still be said to be in the experimental stage and workforce organizations are experimenting with new approaches for different target populations. Therefore, although workforce organizations are often held to benchmarks set by their Boards of Directors or funders, these measures are often established in the absence of a set of objective standards about what outcomes are realistic to expect or what they will cost to attain.

Last year, The Annie E. Casey Foundation contracted with Abt Associates Inc. to conduct a 12-month study of employment programs in the Foundation-funded Jobs Initiative as well as a few innovative employment programs that are not in the Jobs Initiative. The purpose of this study was to investigate performance benchmarks for these employment programs, all of which are serving very low-income people. Performance benchmarks are standard measures that can serve to assess the operating efficiency of a program. The practice of benchmarking has migrated into the nonprofit and government sectors after becoming popular in the business world.[2] Program

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[2] See Letts, Christine W., Ryan, William P. and Grossman, Allen, "Benchmarking: How Non-Profits are Adapting a Business Planning Tool for Enhanced Performance", *The Grantsmanship Center Magazine*, Winter 1999.

managers can use benchmarks to learn how their program is doing in comparison to their counterparts. Similarly, policymakers and funders can use benchmarks to set expectations regarding the true costs of workforce development efforts and more objectively weigh differences in program performance and costs.[3]

To be most useful, benchmarking compares similar entities along identical measures that are of greatest importance to managers, funders and policy makers. This is not as easy as it might appear; accurately benchmarking employment and training efforts is difficult work.[4] Uniform and universally-applicable standards are difficult to define. In addition, certain costs are difficult to capture – particularly in the typical employment program when multiple organizations and agencies are involved in providing services.

This report summarizes the methodology, quantitative findings, and lessons from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's (AECF) benchmarking initiative. It provides an overview of the initiative followed by a discussion of the program model used to determine benchmark measures. The paper then discusses what these measures are and how they were tracked and reported. The following section outlines findings related to three sets of measures analyzed: outcomes for a subset of the employment programs' participants, wages at placement, and cost measures. Finally, it draws conclusions about the lessons of this initiative for the field. These suggest

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[3] Benchmarking typically focuses on the immediate inputs and outputs of an organization's operations. Other tools, such as return on investment (ROI) analysis often include estimations of a broader set of less tangible program impacts (e.g., the value of employment to the individual employee and the economy).

[4] See, for example, "Costs of Employment Placement and Training Programs for the Disadvantaged: An Exploratory Study Conducted by the Wilder Research Center for the McKnight Foundation," Kristen M. Blum and Paul W. Mattessich, August 1995.

that benchmarking can be valuable for practitioners, funders and policymakers alike.

Overview of Jobs Project Benchmarking

AECF initiated the Jobs Project Benchmarking pilot effort to enable program managers in the Foundation-funded Jobs Initiative the opportunity to assess their performance relative to similar programs (both within and outside the Jobs Initiative), provide insights about their own programs' progress over time, and foster dialogue between programs. In addition, the Foundation sought to develop and test a methodology for establishing benchmarks for workforce development agencies, to identify and share lessons learned from its implementation, and to assess the feasibility of its broader implementation.

The ten programs assessed in the effort included the following (about which some details are provided in the Appendix):

- Denver Workforce Initiative (DWI) Teleservice Project;
- Jane Addams Resource Center (JARC) Opportunities in Metalworking;
- Milwaukee Jobs Initiative (MJI) Printing Project and Manufacturing Project;
- Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute's Cooperative Home Care Associates (CHCA);
- Philadelphia Jobs Initiative (PJI) STRIVE Project;
- Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI) Office Occupations Project;
- St. Louis Regional Jobs Initiative (SLRJI) Construction and Work Link projects;
- STRIVE Chicago[5]

[5] The three non-Jobs Initiative projects were JARC, CHCA, and STRIVE Chicago.

While the programs differed in terms of clientele, industry focus, training approach, and the level of support services provided, they all recruited low-income participants, enrolled some portion of them in training and placed them in private sector employment with job retention as a key objective.

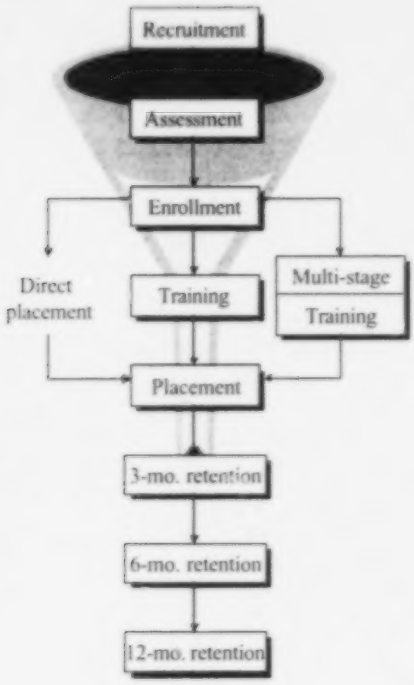
The benchmarking project was facilitated by Abt Associates Inc. and designed with input from the participating organizations and AECF. Data were collected from April 1, 1999 through March 31, 2000. These data included measures of program participant levels at specific milestones: program enrollment, training completion, placement and retention measures. Data were also collected on costs associated with enrollment, training, job placement and pre- and post-placement supports. All participating organizations received six- and 12-month reports that summarized their performance relative to that of their peers.

Program Flow model

Performance measures were determined by developing a model that describes the flow of activities common to all the participating employment programs. The model used in the study – often described as a funnel because decreasing numbers of program participants tend to reach each sequential milestone -- is depicted in Exhibit 1.[6]

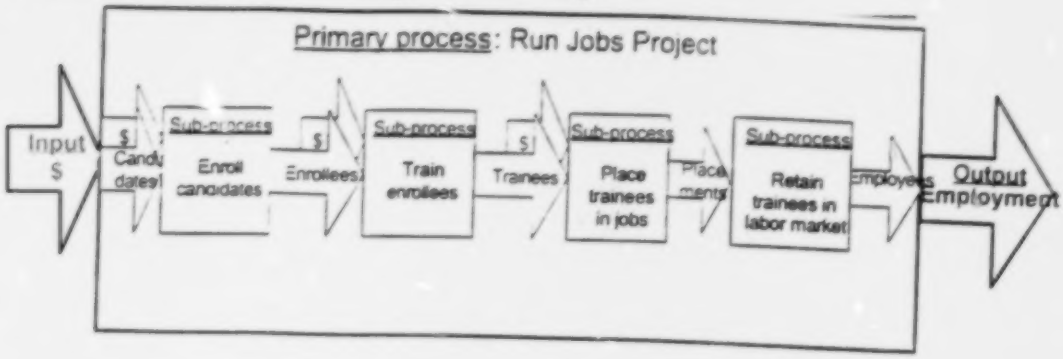
[6] This milestones-based service delivery model derives from the Jobs Initiative's Outcomes Funding Approach developed for AECF by the Rensselaerville Institute.

Exhibit 1: "The Funnel"



Each box in Exhibit 1 represents a milestone in the programs' flow of activity. As illustrated in Exhibit 2 below, each milestone involves inputs (such as program funds) and outputs (the outcomes of the activity). The outputs of one milestone were often the inputs to the next. Benchmarking measures were developed that captured specific inputs, outputs, and *ratios* of outputs generated per input. The ratios of outputs per input constitute program efficiency and cost-effectiveness measures.

Exhibit 2: Program Flow Inputs And Outputs



Measures

Based on the above two models, a series of benchmarking measures were developed. As illustrated in Exhibit 3, data were collected on program milestones and program costs to calculate two general types of measures: cost-related (cost effectiveness) measures and conversion rate measures. These are explained below.

Each of the participating programs tracked the numbers of participants who completed each milestone in the program flow -- enrollment, training, job placement, and labor force retention – and the program expenses at each of those stages. The costs of arriving at each milestone were divided by the counts of participants who arrived at each milestone to arrive at cost-effectiveness measures.

In addition, each program collected data on a specific cohort of participants that entered their program in early 1999. This cohort was tracked to determine how well they fared, and how many members completed each stage of the program. The numbers of cohort members at each milestone were then analyzed to calculate the "conversion rate" of

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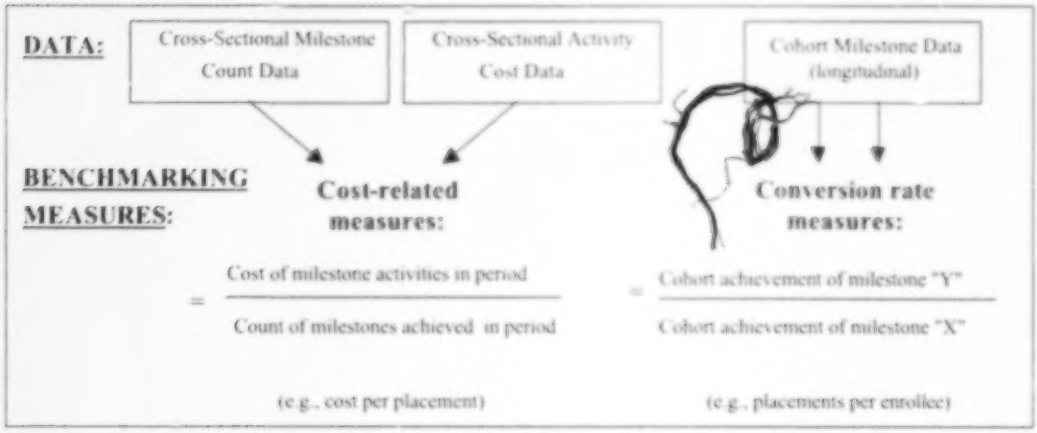
participants from one milestone to the next. One measure, for example, shows how many of the cohort members were "converted" to successful job placements after successfully completing training. Data concerning hourly wages earned by participants upon placement at a job were also collected and compared across sites.

Exhibit 3: Composition of Benchmarking Measures


DATA:
Cross-Sectional Milestone Count Data
Cross-Sectional Activity Cost Data
Cohort Milestone Data (longitudinal)
BENCHMARKING MEASURES:
Cost-related measures:
Conversion rate measures:
= Cost of milestone activities in period / Count of milestones achieved in period
(e.g., cost per placement)
= Cohort achievement of milestone "Y" / Cohort achievement of milestone "X"
(e.g., placements per enrollee)

Data collection and reporting

Data collection can be a substantial burden to program staff who may already feel stretched trying to accomplish the difficult missions of their organizations. Considerable attention was devoted to developing a data collection scheme that ensured that program staff would follow a consistent approach without requiring collection efforts that exceeded their capacity. This study tracked actual program data and did not rely on estimates or projections. Once common definitions were agreed upon, data collection on program milestones was relatively easy.

As expected, collecting cost data proved more challenging. Most employment program staff work with their clients at more than one stage in the program flow. Rather than ask staff to track the time they allocate to each milestone, staff salary and benefits were pro rated to arrive at activity-based cost estimates. The programs' reliance on services provided under contract by outside organizations posed additional challenges related to collecting the relevant data from independent organizations that had not necessarily agreed to participate in this study. To ignore those expenses would have meant underestimating program costs; but obtaining such data would not be easy.

The participating programs agreed that partner agency expenses would be measured at contract value, rather than trying to track actual expenses. For example, if a partner organization had a $25,000 contract to perform recruiting services for the employment program, the cost of the partner's efforts was assumed to be $25,000. This was a practical solution that served the needs of the study without imposing data collection requirements on subcontractor organizations.

Most of the programs in the benchmarking initiative relied to some degree on outside services that assisted their participants to complete training and/or be retained in the workplace. These services were provided because they fell within the mission of the agency providing them, but they were not paid for by the employment program. Examples of such "in-kind" expenses included educational grants, tuition reimbursement, or other training or support provided by other institutions without compensation from the employment program. Calculating the "fair" share that would accurately be included in each program's costs and then actually obtaining the data was

considered prohibitively difficult. Moreover, these other programs often would be available to the participants regardless of whether they were enrolled in the employment program. As such, these costs were not collected nor reflected in the total cost calculations.

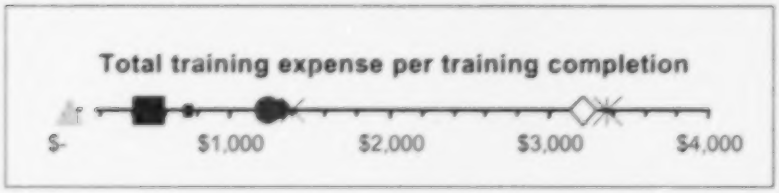
These caveats aside, once the definitions and rules were established, the data collection process was fairly straightforward. A representative at each employment program entered relevant data on a spreadsheet prepared and e-mailed to them by Abt Associates. The spreadsheet contained data quality checks to identify any data that were logically impossible given the definitions of the data collected. For example, if the number of placements in the cohort measure exceeded the number of people who had completed training, the spreadsheet was programmed to display a large warning that a logical error existed in the data.

After a three-month test period, Abt conducted a data collection test to determine whether the data collection and report generation functions were working effectively. The test resulted in minor modifications and clarifications to the data definitions and collection process. Thereafter, six- and 12-month data were collected and benchmarking reports were generated and distributed to the participating employment programs and AECF.

In order to protect the privacy of each organization, the distributed reports differentiated but did not reveal the identity of the participating organizations. Rather, each organization was told how to identify itself in the charts (which used symbols rather than names) and how to compare its benchmarks to the others. A sample report exhibit that shows the cost of training for each training completion is provided in Exhibit 4. A confidentiality agreement made organizations comfortable with the process

from the start of the project. Ultimately, however, all participating organizations revealed their identities and openly discussed the findings and how to interpret them.

Exhibit 4: Sample Benchmarking Report Chart



Findings

A number of general findings emerged concerning the programs' structures and relative volume of participants:

- The program operations had different levels of financial resources, and applied these resources to specific expenses in different ways.
- The programs were supported by different mixes of internal and partner expenses -- some programs were run by the parent agency alone, while others had some number of activities performed by partner agencies.
- The programs operated at significantly different levels of total volume over the 12-month period.
- Numbers of placements and retentions were significantly correlated with the age of the programs, with longer-running programs being associated with more placements and retentions, on average.

Performance benchmarks also reveal a number of more specific findings. As indicated above, three types of benchmarking measures were analyzed:

cohort-based "conversion rate" measures which examines the progress of a subset of participants, placement wages, and cost measures, which are addressed below in that order.

Cohort Benchmarks

As discussed above, participating programs tracked a cohort of participants from enrollment through retention to provide a direct measure of how program participants fared. These cohorts represent relatively small groups ranging in size from about 30 - 100 initial program enrollees. The cohorts' members generally enrolled in the employment programs during the spring of 1999. As summarized in Exhibit 5, the conversion rate measures demonstrate the funnel-shaped trend expected; average rates of successful milestone achievement declined with each successive step.

Exhibit 5: Cohort completion rates per milestone

Measure	Average rate	Min	Max
Training completion rate	77%	62%	89%
Placement rate	63%	35%	100%
3-month retention rate	54%	32%	86%
6-month retention rate	45%	28%	67%

The average training completion rate for the cohorts of participants entering the programs in the spring of 1999 was 77%. Of those for whom sufficient time had passed for placement to occur, (meaning they were "eligible" for placement") 63% were placed in jobs. Like most measures, this rate varied considerably from program to program, depending in part on the basic skills of the participants and the technical demands of the industry

into which they were placed. After three months, an average of 54% of those participants who had been placed at least three months before were known to remain in the labor market. At six months, the average had declined to 45%.[7]

Interestingly, there was a weak negative correlation between the training completion rate and the 3-month retention rates for those programs. Higher training completion rates were associated with slightly lower 3-month retention rates. Similarly, a strong negative correlation existed between the rates of training completion and 6-month retention. This suggests that, depending on the difficulty of the training; some participants will drop out of either the training *or* the first three months of the job.

Placement Wages

Each program also measured the hourly wages their participants made at placement. These figures[8] revealed that:

- Average placement wages varied considerably, from under $7 to over $11 per hour, with an average hourly wage of $8.83.
- Placements in programs with a specific industry focus had higher placement wages than those that did not (statistically significant difference of $1.80 per hour more).
- There was no clear correlation (either positive or negative) between the number of hours of training people received and the wages they received at placement.

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[7] Retention was defined as individuals verified to remain in the labor market (not with a specific employer) upon the 3-, 6-, 9-, or 12-month anniversary of their job placement. The Jobs Initiative projects applied the additional rule (standard to the Jobs Initiative) that the individual could not have had a gap of over 31 days per year of employment per year of qualified employment. Moreover, Jobs Initiative program placements were subject to the standard AECF rule that placements paying under $7 per hour were not counted.

[8] Importantly, as noted above, this data reflects only a subset of the Jobs Initiative and includes three non-Jobs Initiative projects.

- Cohorts from programs associated with higher wages (>$9/hour) were not more likely than others to reach 3- or 6-month retention.
- For the five programs able to report it, the average wage rate at 12-month retention had increased to $9.50.

Cost Measures

The benchmarking effort provided insights into the costs of delivering employment and training services. Average costs were calculated for *specific* activities per successful completion by a single program participant. In addition, *cumulative* costs were calculated that included the costs for all previous steps (e.g., the cumulative cost of a job placement includes the cost of enrolling and training the participant). Exhibit 6 summarizes the costs of service delivery revealed by the benchmarking effort. It should be noted that in most cases, one or two high-end "outliers" bring the average costs for the group up.

Exhibit 6: Cost measure performance summary

Measure		Average	Median	Min	Max
Activity-specific costs per participant					
Total enrollment expense per enrollee	$	275	227	11	732
Total training expense per training completion	$	975	908	-	2,402
Training expense per training hour	$	8.39	8.17	1.92	18.79
Total pre-placement supportive service dollars per placement	$	232	15	-	978
Total placement expense per placement	$	465	408	-	990
Total post-placement expense per 12-month retention	$	3,000	2,468	645	8,546
***Cumulative* (total) costs per successful participant milestone**					
Total enrollment and training expense per training completion	$	1,537	1,352	124	3,441
Total cumulative expense per placement	$	4,021	3,870	1,172	8,307
Total cumulative expense per 12-month placement	$	14,806	10,533	3,382	55,381

As indicated in the table, the activities involved in successfully enrolling a single participant cost an average of $275. Similarly, the programs spent an average of $975 training each participant who completed training. The training itself cost an average of $8.39 per hour, per successful trainee. Pre-placement support services and job placement activities cost $232 and $465, respectively, suggesting that a relatively small emphasis is placed on support services. However, the cost of supportive services per *successful 12-month* placement leap up to $3,000, due partly to the attrition of placements from the labor force during the year. As such, the cost of support services were spread across the relatively few individuals retained for 12 months.

Because programs spend money on groups of people whose numbers usually diminish through attrition over time, the total cost of successfully getting individuals to specific employment and training milestones must

account for both the costs that preceded them, and the diminished number of participants who remain in the program at that point. *Cumulative* cost measures reflect both, capturing the true average costs of getting a single individual through the program as it currently operates. This results in a closer representation of what it actually costs to operate the programs per successful participant.

As indicated in the table, the employment programs spent a cumulative average of $1,537 for each individual they successfully trained and $4,021 per successful job placement. At the point of 12-month retention, the employment programs had spent an average of $14,806 for each participant known to remain in the labor force. Again, this number is driven by the cost of services being spread over relatively few participants.

Lessons and policy implications

Throughout the benchmarking project, observations and ideas were collected from among the participating agencies, sponsors, and program implementers. At a workshop held after the one-year report had been completed, the participating programs discussed the lessons learned from the initiative with Abt. These conclusions follow.

Effective workforce development program must measure retention. When the Jobs Initiative started, retention -- particularly at six and twelve months -- was not an outcome that was commonly measured by workforce development programs. Those programs measuring retention tended to focus on 30- or 90-day retention, the standard traditionally used by Federal workforce development programs. The benchmarking effort (and the Jobs Initiative as a whole) has demonstrated that longer labor market retention outlooks can and should be applied as the measure of success.

The true costs of employment and training must be broadly understood.
The cost of providing employment and training services is not widely known, and may vary considerably from one program to the next. Cost data are generally lacking, particularly matched data for multiple programs. Funders and policy advocates need to know the *true* costs of workforce development efforts to establish suitable funding levels.

The workforce development field needs to better understand its costs.
Like policy-makers, advocates, and funders, workforce development practitioners may not understand the costs of their own activities and how these costs compare to those of their peers. Practitioners need a more detailed picture of where they spend their money and what they gain in the process. While every program has its unique elements, benchmarking can help organizations gain a better sense of the tradeoffs inherent in the decisions they make and the strategies they pursue. While it may be unwise to try to define 'best practices' from benchmarking alone, organizations certainly can gain insights into alternative strategies and practices and the potential benefits (and costs) of adopting these practices.

Managers will share cost data if it is used constructively.
Programs accustomed to competing with peer agencies for scarce funding find it difficult to share detailed information concerning their performance and business costs. Benchmarking efforts must emphasize using results for learning, minimizing competitiveness and the possibility of sanctions or embarrassment in the process. This benchmarking effort benefited from maintaining data confidentiality within the group, with any other use of the data being subject to group consensus.

Measurement standards are critical for benchmarking.
In order to learn from one another, programs need to use the same measurement standards so as to produce valid comparisons. Program statistics compiled for marketing or public relations may be appropriate in those contexts, but not for comparative analyses. Rough "back of the envelope" benchmarking based on figures published for other purposes can be misleading.

Benchmarking should not be confused with evaluation.

Benchmarking should never be seen as a way to evaluate programs in the full context and detail in which they operate. A wide variety of factors may underlie any single performance metric – the clientele served, the program's age and maturity, the funding available, and so on. Evaluation work that seeks to understand such nuances and how they play out requires more detail than performance benchmarking can provide.

Program performance and cost figures may be readily available.

This benchmarking effort required reasonably detailed data collection. In the end, despite initial concerns about the burden of data collection, participating organizations indicated they were able to collect the data relatively quickly – on the order of 2-3 hours for each consecutive report. While the group agreed initially to ease data collection by allowing dollar cost data to be rounded off to the nearest hundred dollars, no organization chose to do so in practice.

Comparisons to the most similar programs tended to be most valuable to managers.

While they benefited from comparisons to the entire group, managers were most interested in comparisons with one or two programs that best reflected their own. They concluded that a formal paired learning process with like programs would be particularly useful in the future. With only ten participating workforce development programs, this pilot benchmarking effort could not provide comparisons of matching programs in all cases. An expanded group would be needed to make feasible that level of matching.

Managers may find tracking only their program over time as valuable as comparisons with other programs

Some program managers concluded that the differences between their own programs and others' undermined the value of some cross-program comparisons. On the other hand, some concluded that comparing their own performance on the same metrics *over time* to be valuable. In this way they could assess whether their own performance was improving over time, regardless of how it compared to others' performance.

This effort of the Annie E. Casey Foundation has demonstrated that despite the challenges, it is possible to track and compare costs from a variety of programs at a relatively high level of detail without placing too great a burden on participating organizations.

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Appendix: Jobs Program Profiles

Denver Workforce Initiative Teleservice project

Year project established	1996
Average participant age	31
Average education	12th Grade
Key participant descriptors	Participants are very diverse. Many are bilingual.
Sector	Call Centers / customer service

Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC) Opportunities in Metalworking

Year established	1998
Average age of participants	34
Average education	Grade 12
Key descriptors of participants	Economically disadvantaged, generally unemployed. Subgroups include limited English

Milwaukee Jobs Initiative Printing (Milwaukee Graphics Arts Institute)

Year established	1997
Average age of participants	32
Average education	12th Grade
Key descriptors of participants	Varied, lower-income population
Sector	Printing / graphics arts
Support services	Interview and assessment offered prior to training. Connections to Job Center supportive service. Follow-up assistance in retention.
Training Curriculum	Primarily "hard" (technical skills) training
Training hours per trainee	206 (Weighted average of enrollees in four quarters)
Cohort definition	All persons enrolled in the Printing project 4/1/99 - 6/30/99

Milwaukee Jobs Initiative Manufacturing Project (Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership & Milwaukee Area Technical College)

Year established	1997
Average age of participants	33
Average education	12th Grade
Key descriptors of participants	Varied, lower-income population
Sector	Manufacturing
Support services	Connections to supportive services at Job Centers. Follow-up assistance in retention. Connections to mentors for retention.
Training Curriculum	Primarily "hard" technical skills training
Training hours per trainee	76
Cohort definition	All persons enrolled in the Manufacturing project 4/1/99 - 6/30/99

PHI/Cooperative Home Care Associates

Year established	1985
Average age of participants	36
Average education	11th Grade
Key descriptors of participants	Approximately 50% are public assistance recipients; 98% English not first language
Sector	Healthcare (clinical)
Support services	Unlimited ride transit card during training; stipend for lunch if not provided by public assistance; counseling services; assistance with public benefits; referrals for childcare, housing and other needs; 5 critical thinking in-service sessions focused on problem-solving and on-the-job case examples
Training Curriculum	Mix of "Hard" and "Soft" skills
Training hours per trainee	160
Cohort definition	32 individuals enrolled in cycle that started in April 1999.

Philadelphia Jobs Initiative STRIVE project

Year established	1997
Average age of participants	32

Average education	Grade 11
Key descriptors of participants	65% welfare-to-work; 20% ex-offender
Sector	General -- No specific industry
Support services	Retention support, job coaching, referrals for day care, health care, substance abuse treatment
Training Curriculum	Primarily 'soft' interpersonal skills training
Training hours per trainee	120
Cohort definition	Cycles enrolled on March 25, April 29 and June 17, 1999

Seattle Jobs Initiative Office Occupations Project

Year established	1996
Average age of participants	33
Average education	12th Grade
Key descriptors of participants	Resident Aliens 17%, Refugees 2%; Difficulty with English 11%; TANF 16%, Other Public Assistance 40%; Homeless 6%, Transitional Housing 10%; Government Assisted Housing 3%; Criminal History 33%; Disabled 14%,
Sector	Office/Administrative
Support services	Supportive services include childcare, transportation, domestic violence counseling, learning disability assessments, and substance abuse counseling. Clients also have access to emergency funds through the Career Investment Fund (CIF).
Training Curriculum	Mix of "Hard" and "Soft" skills Training
Training hours per trainee	546
Cohort definition	Three Office Occupations Classes including 1) Session 9 began 4/26 and ended 5/28, 2) Session 10 began 5/24 and ended 9/28 and 3) Session 11 began 6/28 and ended on 10/5

St. Louis Regional Jobs Initiative Construction Project (East-West Gateway Coordinating Council)

Year established	1998

Average participant age	28
Average education	12th Grade
Key participants descriptors	n/a
Sector	Construction

St. Louis Regional Jobs Initiative Work Link project

Year established	1998
Average age of participants	29
Average education	11th Grade
Key participant descriptors	N/A
Sector	General (no specific industry)
Support services	Alumni support program for Work Link graduates; employer breakfasts to promote hiring of graduates; availability of GED classes; availability of IDA program.
Training Curriculum	Primarily "soft" (interpersonal skills) training
Training hours per trainee	160
Cohort definition	People enrolled from 4/1/99 to 6/30/99

STRIVE Chicago

Year established	1990
Average age of participants	31
Average education	< H.S.=66%; Reading:7.8 grade
Key participant descriptors	68% TANF
Sector	General (no specific industry)
Support services	Case management, job leads, referrals for social services
Training Curriculum	Primarily "soft" (interpersonal skills) training
Training hours per trainee	100
Cohort definition	Clients enrolled at South & West offices for classes from 4/1 through 6/30/99